

Message Text

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ORIGIN NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/IAI: M G ANDERSON:RR
APPROVED BY NEA: M STERNER
EUR/NE: J P SHUMATE
S/S-O: LRFLEISCHER

-----061878 192117Z /62

R 192048Z NOV 77 ZFF6
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY LONDON
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
WHITE HOUSE

S E C R E T STATE 278194

NODIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MPOL, GB, IS

SUBJECT: BRIEFING FOR BRITISH EMBASSY ON SADAT VISIT TO
ISRAEL AND GENEVA CONFERENCE PROSPECTS

REFERENCE: (A) STATE 276546 (B) BRUSSELS 16565

1. NEA DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY STERNER BRIEFED BRITISH
EMBOFF SQUIRE NOVEMBER 18 ON LATEST DEVELOPMENTS IN U.S.
THINKING ON SADAT VISIT TO ISRAEL AND EFFECT OF VISIT ON
PROSPECTS FOR GENEVA NEGOTIATIONS. STERNER SAID THAT IN
VIEW OF CANCELLATION OF BEGIN VISIT TO UK AND FACT THAT
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NO DATE HAD YET BEEN SET FOR RESCHEDULING VISIT, ORIGINAL
REASON FOR BRIEFING HAD BEEN OVERTAKEN, BUT IT MIGHT
NEVERTHELESS BE USEFUL TO EXCHANGE VIEWS ON LATEST FAST-
BREAKING DEVELOPMENTS.

2. STERNER SAID SADAT VISIT TOOK U.S. BY SURPRISE BUT
WE HAD BECOME ACCUSTOMED TO BEING SURPRISED BY SADAT.

WE SAW VISIT AS BOLD AND COURAGEOUS MOVE THAT COULD BRING ABOUT SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN PSYCHOLOGICAL CLIMATE OF ARAB-ISRAEL DISPUTE. WE HAD SOME CONCERN OVER HEAVY CRITICISM SADAT WAS GETTING FROM SOME ARAB STATES, AND WE SAW SOME RISK THAT VISIT COULD AROUSE GREAT

EXPECTATIONS WHICH COULD NOT BE IMMEDIATELY FULFILLED. WE SAW NEED FOR FOLLOW UP IN TERMS OF EFFECTIVE NEGOTIATIONS FOR THIS REASON, AND BELIEVED VISIT MADE EXPEDITIOUS RECONVENING OF GENEVA CONFERENCE ALL THE MORE NECESSARY. ARAB CONSENSUS, AT LEAST AMONG THE MODERATES, WAS ESSENTIAL IF NEGOTIATIONS WERE TO SUCCEED AND WE HAD URGED GOI TO CONSIDER VISIT IN THAT LIGHT. WE HAD ALSO URGED GOI TO MEET SADAT'S INITIATIVE WITH SOMETHING THAT WOULD BE OF HELP TO HIM. MOST USEFUL RESULT, IN OUR VIEW, WOULD BE IF TWO LEADERS COULD CLEAR AWAY REMAINING PROCEDURAL DIFFICULTIES FOR GENEVA IN SUCH A WAY THAT SYRIANS PROBLEMS ALSO WOULD BE LESSENED.

3. SQUIRE ASKED IF IT WAS POSSIBLE VISIT COULD RESULT IN AGREEMENT ON PALESTINIAN PARTICIPATION AT GENEVA. STERNER THOUGHT EGYPTIANS AND ISRAELIS WERE IN FACT QUITE CLOSE ON THIS ISSUE; PROBLEM WAS THE SYRIANS WHO AS FAR AS WE COULD TELL HAD NOT MADE UP THEIR MINDS ABOUT WHETHER PLO HAD TO BE THERE OR
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WHETHER THEY COULD ACCEPT SOMETHING LESS. SQUIRE MENTIONED THAT SOVIET EMBOFF HAD RECENTLY APPROACHED BRITISH EMBOFF IN WASHINGTON TO ASK WHAT HE THOUGHT OF SADAT MOVE. IMPRESSION GAINED WAS THAT SOVIETS DID NOT PLAN TO PLAY HELPFUL ROLE. STERNER REPLIED WE HAD NOTED MATERIAL CRITICAL OF SADAT APPEARING IN SOVIET PRESS, AND WE WOULD BE TALKING TO SOVIETS ABOUT THIS. OUR IMPRESSION OF SOVIET BEHAVIOR THUS FAR WAS THAT THEY WERE NOT WILLING TO GET MUCH OUT AHEAD OF THEIR MAIN ARAB CLIE TS, ESPECIALLY THE SYRIANS.

4. SQUIRE ASKED IF STERNER COULD OFFER ANY GUIDANCE TO BRITISH ON HOW TO RESPOND TO SADAT VISIT TO ISRAEL. IT WAS HIS UNDERSTANDING THAT U.S. HAD ENCOURAGED ARAB GOVERNMENTS TO SPEAK OUT IN SUPPORT OF SADAT. STERNER SAID WE HAD ASKED VARIOUS GOVERNMENTS, INCLUDING ALL NATO GOVERNMENTS, TO SPEAK OUT IN SUPPORT OF SADAT. WE HAD SUGGESTED TO OUR MISSION IN BRUSSELS THAT IT SEE IF PRESIDENCY OF THE EC-9 COUNCIL COULD NOT ISSUE STATEMENT OF SUPPORT IN THE NAME OF EC-9. WE THOUGHT THIS WOULD BE HELPFUL TO SADAT BECAUSE ARABS VALUED THEIR CONNECTION WITH EUROPE AND PARTICULARLY BECAUSE, IN PAST,

EC-9 HAD GONE FURTHER THAN U.S. IN DIRECTION OF ARAB POSITION.

5. SQUIRE ASKED IF WE THOUGHT BEGIN AND SADAT MIGHT BE ABLE AT END OF VISIT TO ANNOUNCE DATE FOR CONVENING GENEVA. STERNER REPLIED THIS WOULD BE DIFFICULT SINCE OTHER PARTIES TO CONFERENCE INCLUDING TWO CHAIRMEN WOULD ALSO HAVE TO AGREE. BUT IT WOULD BE GOOD IF THEY COULD SAY THEY HAD AGREED TO GET TO GENEVA AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AND PUT PROCEDURAL HASSLE BEHIND THEM. WE HOPED ISRAELIS

COULD PROVIDE SADAT WITH ENOUGH SO THAT SADAT COULD GO BACK TO SYRIANS AND SAY VISIT WAS A SUCCESS AND HAD BEEN AN ACCOMPLISHMENT.

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6. SQUIRE RETURNED TO THE SUBJECT OF THE EC-9 STATEMENT AND ASKED ABOUT TIMING. STERNER REPLIED THAT STATEMENT WOULD HAVE MOST IMPACT IF IT CAME WHILE SADAT VISIT ACTUALLY UNDERWAY. SQUIRE SAW NO PROBLEM WITH THIS AS FAR AS BRITISH WERE CONCERNED, BUT FELT THERE MIGHT BE HESITATION ON PART OF EC-9 DUE TO EMERGING DIVISIONS IN ARAB WORLD. RESULT COULD BE THAT EC-9 WOULD DEFER STATEMENT UNTIL AFTER SADAT VISIT AND UNTIL AFTER ASSESSMENT HAD BEEN MADE AS TO ITS SUCCESS. (BRUSSELS 16565 (REF B) AS WELL AS TEXT OF HELPFUL OWEN STATEMENT RECEIVED AFTER CONVERSATION REPORTED THIS CABLE.)

7. STERNER ALSO BRIEFED SQUIRE ON TWO POINTS AMBASSADOR BREWSTER HAD ASKED CALLAGHAN TO MAKE TO BEGIN IF AND WHEN HE GETS TO LONDON. VANCE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: BRIEFINGS, HEAD OF GOVERNMENT VISITS, NEGOTIATIONS, CAT-A
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 19-Nov-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977STATE278194
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: M G ANDERSON:RR
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: n/a
Expiration:
Film Number: P840070-0653, P800020-0238
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From: STATE
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Image Path:
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Litigation History:
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Office: ORIGIN NODS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Reference: 77 STATE 275546, 77 BRUSSELS 15565, 77 STATE 27654, 77 BRUSSELS 16565, 77 STATE 276546
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
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Review Date: 17-Mar-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 515749
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CHANGED> GWR 20040429; <DBA CHANGED> GWR 20040505
Subject: BRIEFING FOR BRITISH EMBASSY ON SADAT VISIT TO ISRAEL AND GENEVA CONFERENCEPROSPECTS
TAGS: MPOL, OVIP, PBOR, GB, IS, EG, XF, UK
To: LONDON AMMAN MULTIPLE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/b15c3e15-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009